

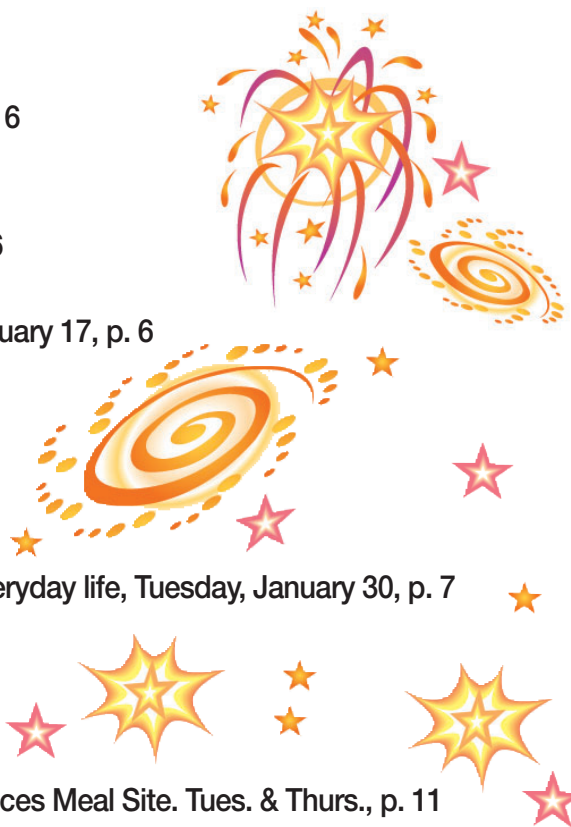


WISHING YOU A HEALTHY & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Start the New Year off right by staying active and getting involved with the COA. Step out of your comfort zone and try something new! We offer a wide variety of activities, informative talks, and social engagements.

HIGHLIGHTS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- ▶ Discussions with Denise, Wednesday, January 3, p. 6
- ▶ Free Hearing Clinic, Wednesday, January 3, p. 4
- ▶ Focus Group on Housing in Stow, Wednesday, January 3, p. 6
- ▶ Reiki, Monday, January 8, p. 6
- ▶ Keepsake Ornament Craft Class, Tuesday, January 9, p. 6
- ▶ Lowell National Historical Park, Wednesday, January 10, p. 6
- ▶ Poetry Workshop, Tuesday, January 16, p. 6
- ▶ Breakfast Club: Assabet Tech High School, Wednesday, January 17, p. 6
- ▶ Elvis Tribute Concert, Thursday, January 18, p. 7
- ▶ Genealogy, Tuesday, January 23, p. 7
- ▶ Monthly Movie Matinee: Elvis, Thursday, January 25, p. 7
- ▶ Grief & Healing Support Group, Thursday, January 25, p. 7
- ▶ Lunch Bunch: Victor's 50's Diner, Friday, January 26, p. 7
- ▶ Embracing the Future, Artificial Intelligence simplified for everyday life, Tuesday, January 30, p. 7
- ▶ Armchair Travel, The Baltics, Tuesday, January 30, p. 7
- ▶ Open House Social, Wednesday, January 31, p. 7
- ▶ Musings from the desk of "Outreach", p. 8
- ▶ Recipe of the Month: Taco Soup/Chili, p. 10
- ▶ Have lunch with friends for only \$2. Minuteman Senior Services Meal Site. Tues. & Thurs., p. 11
- ▶ Shop Local! Unique handmade items. Visit our Gift Shop, all proceeds benefit Stow seniors, p. 15-16



COA Offices will be closed on Monday, January 1st & 15th!

Inside this Issue:

Page #

Council on Aging: Programs & Services Offered.....	2 & 3
Focus on Health, SHINE Information and Ask a Question.....	4
Recurring Activities & Events	5
Events & Trips	6 & 7
Outreach Information and Activity Calendar.....	8 & 9
Nutritional Programs	10 & 11
Town & Community News	12 & 13
State Rep. Hogan's Senior News	14
Stow Friends of the Council on Aging	15 & 16

STOW COUNCIL ON AGING

Pompositticut Community Center • 509 Great Rd. Stow, MA 01775
Hours: Monday – Friday 8 am – 3:30 pm

E-mail: coa@stow-ma.gov

Tel. # 978-897-1880

Website: www.stow-ma.gov

Fax # 978-897-0486

Council on Aging Staff

Alyson Toole, Executive Director
 Kathleen Surdan, Outreach Coordinator
 Margaret Decker, Outreach Worker
 Gigi Lengieza, Transportation/Volunteer Coordinator and Office Manager
 Martha Shea, Administrative Assistant
 Penny Sweeney, Administrative Assistant
 Dave Ashman, Senior Van Driver/Dispatcher/Coordinator
 Chris Schuch, PT Van Driver
 Newton Taylor, On call Van Driver
 Bob Kitchen, On call Van Driver

COA BOARD MEMBERS

Jeanne Genereux, Chair
 William Byron, Vice-Chair
 Ruth Delmonico, Secretary
 Charlie Aaronson, Member
 Al Arthur, Member
 George Nisotel, Member
 Kathy O'Brien, Member
 Brian Burke, Associate
 Rep. Kate Hogan, Associate
 June Thall, Associate

COA Board Meets Monthly
(2nd Thursday at 10 am at Pompo)

Mission Statement

The Town of Stow Council on Aging is here to provide support to those age 60 and older by being a resource of information on elder affairs, providing social activities, outreach services, and helping people remain in their homes as long as safely possible.

SUGGESTIONS WELCOME!

There is a suggestion box in the lobby of the Pompositticut Community Center. Or email Gigi at COAAdminAsst@Stow-MA.gov.

BECOME A COA VOLUNTEER!

Do you have some time to spare? Volunteers are needed in many different areas. Contact Gigi, Volunteer Coordinator, at COAAdminAsst@Stow-MA.gov.

VOLUNTEER



Transportation Services

Our complete Transportation Policy is available on our website. **All transportation reservations must be made by calling the COA between 8 am and NOON Monday through Friday (excluding holidays).**

FOR COA VAN RIDES

- Requests must be made no later than 12 pm the business day before.
- Pick-ups start at 8:30 am, with the last ride no later than 2:30 pm weekdays.
- Our service area (originating or departing from Stow) is Acton, Bolton, Boxboro, Harvard, Hudson, and Maynard. Transportation for medical appointments is provided to Concord, Marlboro and Sudbury.
- Fares: Stow: \$2; Out-of-Stow: \$3; Meal site, Food Pantry, COA Office: free.

FOR OTHER TRANSPORTATION RIDES

- *Volunteer drivers* may be used for **medical appointments** outside of service area/business hours. **Advanced notice of one week minimum required!**
- “Go Stow” grant program rides are available for eligible residents to **medical appointments** outside of service area/business hours. Some restrictions apply. **Reservations must be made 48 hours in advance.**



WINTER WEATHER POLICY

When the COA is closed due to inclement weather, we will post it on the Town website COA page (www.stow-ma.gov/council-aging). You will be notified if you have signed up for an event or scheduled a van ride.

2023-24 FUEL ASSISTANCE

If you had SMOC Fuel Assistance last year and need assistance completing the recertification or if you are a new applicant, please make an appointment with Kathleen Surdan, Outreach Coordinator.

OUTREACH STAFF

Speak with Outreach to learn about what assistance you may qualify for such as tax relief, food resources, fuel assistance, etc. They have great resources, provide information and referrals, home care options, advocacy, and much more! Call the COA at (978) 897-1880 to speak with Outreach to schedule an appointment.

DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

We have a variety of gently used equipment available to **Stow residents** on a first come, first served basis. Our inventory varies, but typically includes walkers, canes, wheelchairs, shower chairs and commodes. To borrow items (**for short-term use only**), please call the COA at (978-897-1880) to make arrangements.

NOTARY SERVICE AVAILABLE

Stow seniors only. Please call the COA Outreach to arrange an appointment.

TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE

Is new technology driving you crazy? Want some help? The COA is here for you! Call the COA to be connected with a technology volunteer. We also offer in-person assistance by appointment every **Wednesday** morning. **NOTE – new day**

DONATIONS

As a service to our senior residents, the COA accepts donations such as clothing, household goods, craft supplies, books, and durable medical equipment. Your donations help the COA and its senior residents since we:

- Make items available to residents based on outreach assessment.
- Use items to offset COA administrative and program costs.
- Turn materials into handmade items for sale at the Stow Gift Shop.
- Re-sell merchandise in the Gift Shop or at other SFCOA events.
- Save soft goods for the SFCOA “Savers” fundraiser.

Donations should be in good useable condition, packaged so that a single individual can easily handle the donation and sorted by like items.

Additional information regarding specific categories of donations is available on our website.

AARP FREE TAX ASSISTANCE

In February, AARP volunteer Jim Brown will continue to provide his services to LOW INCOME Stow taxpayers over 60 assisting with state and federal income tax preparation. Appointment times will be available starting mid-February and can be booked starting February 1st by calling the COA at 978-897-1880.



MONTHLY SHINE QUESTION

By: Michael Matatia, SHINE Counselor

Question: I hear you are leaving Stow as the SHINE counselor. What do we do?

Answer: You need not worry. Minuteman Senior Services will continue to support you. When you need SHINE services call the Stow COA as you did before. I am so impressed with the quality of the volunteers; they are all well-trained and can assist you. I leave you in good hands.

With my leaving, this is my last article. I just want to leave you with words of wisdom to remember.

1. Every year review your plan, plans change, your perfect plan of last year may not be next year's best plan and that ruled-out plan last year may be your perfect one this year. Actively manage your health care.
2. There is a lot of financial help with health care, there are many programs in addition to Mass Health that have much higher income and even no asset limit. Speak to SHINE to get guidance on what you may qualify for. The Stow Town Social Worker can also provide guidance on some of these programs.
3. Managing your estate is as important as your healthcare selection. Do you have a Will or Health Care Proxy, have you considered revocable or irrevocable trusts to protect or facilitate the passing on of your estate to others? Also, manage your income flow so you are not charged an income surplus for Part D or Part B.
4. You can make the best health care decisions but if you do not stay mentally and physically active you may be further challenged with health care issues. The Stow COA offers great programs to stay physically and mentally active. The Town has many committees where your experience would be valuable. Get involved with your spiritual organization to develop a support community.

I am still around for a few months for any critical need, but this is my last article. I must say I have met all types, rich and poor, stressed and calm, informed and confused but every one of my clients has been so kind and appreciative, I in turn thank you for the chance to meet so many wonderful people. Stow is a great town, and you have the best COA. I wish you all the best and good health.

HEARING CLINIC

Day & Time: Wednesday, Jan. 3, 9:30 -11:30 am **Cost:** FREE **Sign up by:** 12/29

Michael Drennan, Board Certified specialist from Roger's Hearing Solutions provides hearing evaluations. Call the COA to book an appointment.

WELL ADULT CLINIC

(formerly known as Blood Pressure Clinic)

Day & Time: Wednesday, Jan. 3, 10 am – 12 noon

All Stow adult residents are welcome to drop in and have personalized, free one-on-one attention from the public health nurse. Offered services include blood pressure and blood sugar screenings, diet/nutrition information and teaching, medication review and assistance with identifying and coordinating community resources and referrals.



GUIDELINES FOR COA ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Pre-registration required. Attendance is limited.
- ▶ Sign-up for the events below starting on the 15th of the month for the following month online at <https://myactivecenter.com>, in person or by calling the COA at (978) 897-1880.
- ▶ All activities with a fee must be paid for in advance.
- ▶ Stow residents only for in-person classes. Non-Stow residents virtual if space.

GAMES

If you want to play at another time, call to make arrangements.

- **Bridge** - Mondays, 1 pm
- **Poker Games** - Tuesdays, 1 pm
- **Ping Pong** - Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 pm
- **Chess** - during business hours
- **Scrabble** - Thursdays, 10:30 am
- **Pool/Billiards** - during business hours
- **Mahjong** - Fridays, 1 pm

EXERCISE

Qi Gong: **In-Person & Via Zoom!** FREE. Instructor: Carolyn McDonald.
Mondays 8:50 am. **NO Class 1/1, 1/15, 1/22 & 1/29**

Senior Fitness: **In-Person only!** CLASS FEE: \$3, Instructor: Terri Zaborowski.
Mon., Wed., Fri., 10 am. **No Class 1/1 & 1/15**

Stretch & Flex: **In-Person only!** CLASS FEE: \$3, Instructor Terri Zaborowski.
Mon., Wed., Fri., 11:15 am. **No Class 1/1 & 1/15**

Yoga: **In-Person & Via Zoom!** CLASS FEE: \$3, Instructor: Terry Kessel
Myers Coney. Fri. 9 am. **Virtual Only 1/5**

CREATIVITY

Art (Open Studio): Mondays, 9:30 - 12 Noon. Want to create in a supportive fun environment? Bring your medium of choice to paint, sketch, charcoal, oil, watercolor, acrylic or pastel.

Knitting and more: Mondays, 1 - 3 pm, Knitters, needle pointers, crocheters, embroiderers are welcome.

Quilting: Tuesdays, 9 - 12 Noon. All levels welcome.

Projects For Purpose: Wednesdays, 9 - 12 Noon. Love to sew?
Contact Rita at 617-880-9545 for more information.

SFCOA Creators Collaborative: Thursdays, 10 - 12 Noon. Come! Collaborate!
Create!

RECURRING GROUPS

Men's Discussion Group - 1st Thursday of the month at 10 am.

Veterans Social - 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10 am.

Genealogy - 4th Tuesday of the month at 1 pm.



EVENTS/TRIPS POLICY

Sign up opens the 1st of every month! If you plan to attend an event at the COA, you must:

- Pre-register at <https://myactivecenter.com/>, in-person or call (978) 897-1880 by the deadline.
- If you need a ride from your home to the COA, you must book it at least 24 hrs. in advance!
- If there is a cost, payment must be made within 48 hours of registering for the event but no later than the deadline.
- We must have a minimum of 5 (five) attendees for an event and 7 (seven) paid attendees for a field trip, or the event will be cancelled.
- If you cancel, your money will NOT be returned unless we can fill your seat.
- If you are paying by check, please make checks payable to: SFCOA.
- For trips we meet at the Pompositticut Community Center. Please park in the row closest to Rt.117.
- Stow residents only.
- Don't forget to bring your File of Life.

DISCUSSIONS WITH DENISE

Day & Time: Wed., January 3, 9:30 – 11 am

Denise Demboski, Town Administrator, will be available to answer questions and listen to your comments/suggestions. Stop by for an open discussion or to speak with her privately (10-minute appointments scheduled between 11-11:30 am).

FOCUS GROUP ON HOUSING

Day & Time: Wed., Jan. 3, 1 pm **Sign up by:** 1/2

The Planning Dept. wants to hear about your needs regarding housing in Stow. The Town is updating its plan to reflect goals for housing affordability and stock based on residents' current context and needs.

REIKI

Day & Time: Monday, January 8, 10 – 12 pm

Cost: FREE **Sign up by:** 1/3 **Limit:** 4

Stow resident, Ginny Layton-Leal, a Reiki practitioner and a licensed massage and craniosacral therapist since 2005, will offer four 30-minute private sessions by appointment. Reiki can have synergistic effects, including more rapid and longer-lasting healing, when clients are also working with providers of conventional medical care, physical therapy, massage, behavioral therapy, or other modalities. A desire for more joy and meaningful connections led Ginny to transition from a corporate career to wellness and bodywork.

KEEPSAKE ORNAMENT CRAFT

Day & Time: Tuesday, January 9, 1 pm

Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/5 **Limit:** 8

Do you have some special fabric that you want to keep but don't know how? Why not use that fabric in this class to make a lovely ornament. No sewing required! Please bring 56, 2"x 3" rectangle pieces of fabric. If you will be using two fabrics bring 32 pieces of the main color and 24 pieces of the accent fabric, for a total of 56 rectangle pieces. In addition to the rectangle pieces, bring a 21 1/2"x11" piece of the primary fabric. All the other materials will be provided. Don't want to cut in advance? Come a little early and we will help.

LOWELL NAT'L HISTORICAL PARK BOOTT COTTON MILLS MUSEUM & MILL GIRLS AND IMMIGRANTS EXHIBIT



Day & Time: Wednesday, January 10, 11:30 am

Cost: \$8 **Sign up by:** 1/8 **Limit:** 14

Have a snack/lunch before you come to join us on the trip to Lowell where we will go to the Museum and tour the cotton mill and see some of the actual machines that were used. We will then go next door and visit the Mill Girls and Immigrants Boarding House.

POETRY WORKSHOP

Day & Time: Tuesday, January 16, 1– 2:30 pm

Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/11 **Limit:** 8

Led by Emily Mlcak. This will be the first in a series of three workshops. In each class we will read some poetry together, and then write and talk about that poetry. Readings will be from a wide range of poems. Some traditional, some less so – and we'll use a range of writing prompts and techniques. It will be fun and engaging, and we will explore how poetry makes us feel, helps us to listen to and see the world. Bring paper, and something to write with.

BREAKFAST CLUB ASSABET TECH HIGH SCHOOL

Day & Time: Wednesday, January 17, 9 am

Cost: \$3 **Sign up by:** 1/15 **Limit:** 14

(Bring money for food: \$10 + .70 tax)

Join in and enjoy the 'All You Can Eat' Buffet breakfast including omelet and waffle stations.

ELVIS TRIBUTE CONCERT



Day & Time: Thursday,
January 18, 1 pm
Cost: FREE **Sign up by:**
1/16 **Limit:** 30

Calvin Benelli of Acton will sing, dance, and speak in true Elvis style. A fun performance not to be missed, this special event is sure to bring back fond memories of the King of Rock & Roll! His previous local performances have been big hits!

GENEALOGY

Day & Time: Tuesday, January 23, 1 pm
Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/19 **Limit:** 15

Learn how to find digitized records on FamilySearch and Ancestry before they are indexed. Part of our meeting will be watching a video on the subject.

MOVIE MATINEE ELVIS

Day & Time: Thursday, January 25, 12:30 pm
Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/23 **Limit:** 20

Year: 2022 **Length:** 149 minutes + intermission

This film focuses on the relationship between Elvis and Colonel Tom Parker during their 20 yr. relationship, from Presley's rise to fame to his unprecedented stardom, against the backdrop of the evolving cultural landscape and loss of innocence in America. Central to that journey is one of the significantly influential people in Elvis's life, Priscilla Presley.

Please note the early start time!

GRIEF AND HEALING DROP-IN SUPPORT GROUP

Day & Time: Thursday, January 25, 2 pm

Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/23 **Limit:** None

The Nashoba Associated Boards of Health is sponsoring a drop-in Grief & Healing Support Group for Stow seniors. Facilitated by grief counselor Karen Campbell, this group offers a safe space to share experiences of the grief journey. The Grief & Healing Support Group honors all types of grief, including grief due to loss, change and transitions. This group is an opportunity to learn more about the grief process and strategies for managing grief. Confidentiality is respected and honored. In recognition that grief has no time frame, those who grieve are welcomed at any time in their journey. No one is required to commit to consistent attendance. (For more information, please contact the COA Outreach staff.)

LUNCH BUNCH VICTOR'S 50'S DINER, HUDSON, MA

Day & Time: Friday, January 26, 11:30 am

Cost: \$3 & cash for meal

Sign up by: 1/24 **Limit:** 14

Victor's is a nostalgic, 1950s-style diner preparing & serving hearty, big portions, American breakfast & lunch classics, with great service and amazing 50's atmosphere.

EMBRACING THE FUTURE: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SIMPLIFIED FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Day & Time: Tuesday, January 30, 10 am

Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/25 **Limit:** 20

Join us for an engaging presentation by Stow resident, Eric Souza, Chief Technology Officer for Berkshire Partners, tailored specifically for senior citizens. Eric will demystify the world of Artificial Intelligence (AI), breaking down its basics in a clear and approachable manner. Learn how the publicly available AI chatbot, ChatGPT, can become a helpful tool in your daily life, from answering questions to helping with various tasks. This talk promises to be an eye-opening experience, showing how AI can be both understandable and useful for all age groups. Don't miss this chance to explore the positive potential of AI in enhancing your daily life!

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL THE BALTICS

Day & Time: Tuesday, January 30, 1 pm

Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/26 **Limit:** 20

Linda Gilberti will be presenting a lively slide show of her travels to the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, three independent European countries perched on the south side of the Baltic Sea, south of the Scandinavian countries. Their small size makes them a delight to explore.

OPEN HOUSE SOCIAL

Day & Time: Wednesday, January 31, 5:30 pm

Cost: Free **Sign up by:** 1/25 **Limit:** None

Come join in the fun at an EVENING event for ALL Stow seniors. Visit with COA staff, hear about what we offer and share input around future plans to accommodate the schedules of both retired and still-working folks. Fill out our survey during the event and you might win a valuable door prize! Enjoy delicious appetizers, soft drinks, coffee, and desserts.

MUSINGS FROM THE DESK OF “OUTREACH”

Dear Stow Seniors,

First let me apologize for hijacking this page where you usually find an interview. I know that many folks consider that a highlight of our newsletter!

The start of a new year often lends itself to looking back at how a team of people spent their time the previous twelve months. Hopefully many innovations and accomplishments come to mind and a sense of pride follows. I absolutely think that is true of the COA in general, and of the outreach team of which I've been blessed to be a member for the last four and a half years.

I do wonder at times if folks know about all that we do. Our colleagues toss around the advice/suggestion to “Call Outreach!” or “Talk to Outreach!” when seniors share their challenges, needs and suggestions. But are all the services we provide and connections we make common knowledge in our community? Perhaps not.

We of course strive to assist folks in meeting their day-to-day needs, whether physical, social, or emotional. Most of you know that we lend out crutches, walkers, shower chairs and other durable medical equipment. And that we host Meal Site lunches and plan social events, classes, talks, walks, movies, and field trips. This past year we've begun hosting monthly meetings of Men's Group and Grief and Healing Group. Our exercise classes are popular and well attended, so clearly the word is out in that regard. And those who need transportation know how great our van service and volunteer drivers are.

But do you know that we help with applications for fuel assistance, real estate tax abatement and SNAP cards for those who qualify financially? (The income guidelines are more generous than you might think). Are you aware that we make connections to the Stow Food Pantry and other sources of groceries and other necessities? That we can help you get on a low-income housing list or access rental assistance?

If you were one of the folks who told us in our survey that you'd love to participate in COA activities, but you are not free during the day as you are still working, we have some good news. We're hosting an evening Open House Social for ALL Stow seniors on Wednesday, January 31, 2024, at 5:30 pm. Details are on page 7 of this newsletter. Please come see us and spend time with new and old friends. We promise to make it a memorable night!

I'd like to share a few things we'd like you all to know. One is that, while we would never discourage anyone from coming into the COA, calling ahead for an appointment if you need to meet with one of the outreach staff is appreciated. We want to give you our undivided attention and that is the best way to ensure that you get it!

Another is that there are many creative ways to support our seniors. Many don't take much time or cost a thing! There is a list on page 3 this month of donations we welcome. Not on the list, but very helpful: empty parmesan cheese shaker containers we can fill with a sand/salt mixture to prevent icy walkways, paper goods like tissues, paper towels, and toilet paper, non-perishable items for our food program, Ensure (chocolate or vanilla), and gift cards of any amount to Shaw's or Market Basket. When we can help a senior with necessities when funds are running low, it's a wonderful feeling. But it's only possible if we have the provisions on hand.

Many of you do a great job of looking out for your neighbors and friends. Please continue checking on folks and letting us know if anyone needs assistance, especially during the cold weather months.

In closing I would like to thank you all for being so wonderful! I am grateful to be working with the caring, kind, and generous seniors of Stow. I have learned from every one of you. Happy 2024 to you all!

Kathleen Surdan, Stow COA Outreach Coordinator

January 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Closed for New Years Day	2 9:00 Quilting 12:00 Meal Site 1:00 Poker 1:30 Ping Pong	3 8:00 Technology Assistance 9:00 Projects for Purpose 9:30 Discussions with Denise 9:30 Hearing Clinic 10:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Well Adult Clinic 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Focus Group	4 10:00 Men's Discussion Group 10:00 SFCOA Creators Collaborative 10:30 Scrabble 12:00 Meal Site 1:30 Ping Pong	5 9:00 Yoga VIRTUAL ONLY 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Mahjong
8 8:50 Qi Gong 9:30 Open Art 10:00 Reiki 10:00 Senior Fitness 10:30 SHINE 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Bridge 1:00 Knitting and More	9 9:00 Quilting 10:00 SFCOA Board Meeting 12:00 Meal Site 1:00 Keepsake Ornament 1:00 Poker 1:30 Ping Pong	10 8:00 Technology Assistance 9:00 Projects for Purpose 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex 11:30 Lowell National Historical Park	11 10:00 Board Meeting 10:00 SFCOA Creators Collaborative 10:30 Scrabble 12:00 Meal Site 1:30 Ping Pong	12 9:00 Yoga 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Mahjong
15 Closed in Observance of MLK Day	16 9:00 Quilting 10:00 Veterans Social 12:00 Meal Site 1:00 Poetry Workshop 1:00 Poker 1:30 Ping Pong	17 8:00 Technology Assistance 9:00 Breakfast Club 9:00 Projects for Purpose 10:00 Cemetery 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex	18 10:00 SFCOA Creators Collaborative 10:30 Scrabble 12:00 Meal Site 1:00 Elvis Tribute Concert 1:30 Ping Pong	19 9:00 Yoga 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Mahjong
22 8:50 NO Qi Gong 9:30 Open Art 10:00 Senior Fitness 10:30 SHINE 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Bridge 1:00 Knitting and More	23 9:00 Quilting 12:00 Meal Site 1:00 Genealogy 1:00 Poker 1:30 Ping Pong	24 8:00 Technology Assistance 9:00 Projects for Purpose 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex	25 10:00 SFCOA Creators Collaborative 10:30 Scrabble 12:00 Meal Site 12:30 Movie Matinee 1:30 Ping Pong 2:00 Grief and Healing Group	26 9:00 Yoga 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex 11:30 Lunch Bunch 1:00 Mahjong
29 8:50 NO Qi Gong 9:30 Open Art 10:00 Senior Fitness 10:30 SHINE 11:15 Stretch & Flex 1:00 Bridge 1:00 Knitting and More	30 9:00 Quilting 10:00 Artificial Intelligence 12:00 Meal Site 1:00 Armchair Travel 1:00 Poker 1:30 Ping Pong	31 8:00 Technology Assistance 9:00 Projects for Purpose 10:00 Senior Fitness 11:15 Stretch & Flex 5:30 Open House		

COA FREE FOOD PROGRAM FOR STOW RESIDENTS

Stow residents must call the COA at (978) 897-1880 between **9 - 10 am** Monday through Friday to schedule same day appointments between **10:10 - 10:50 am**. **Only 1 BAG PER PERSON during appointment times**. No appointments necessary from **11 am - 3:30 pm**. Don't come late on Fridays as all perishables are packed up and given away by 3 pm. Note: The COA Food Program will be opening at 12 noon on Friday, January 19.

NEED HELP? THE STOW FOOD PANTRY IS HERE FOR YOU!

The next Stow Food Pantry is on Saturday, January 6, Sunday, January 7, and Friday, January 19 from 9 am – 12 pm, by appointment only. *No referrals required. No financial questions asked.* If you are unable to make it to the Pantry, please contact them and they can work something out. If you need help, please call 978-897-4230 or email: stowfoodp@gmail.com.

ACTION FOOD PANTRY

The Acton Food Pantry serves Stow and is open 3 weeks/month. They are located at 235 Summer Road, #205, Boxborough, Phone: (978) 635-9295.

OPEN TABLE, Maynard

Need food assistance? Open Table in Maynard offers drive-thru pantry service. To find out more about its current services, visit www.opentable.org or call (978) 369-2275.

GUEST TABLE COMMUNITY SUPPER AT FIRST PARISH CHURCH

Offered on Friday, January 12th (the second Friday of each month) from 5 – 6:30 pm. All are welcome. There's no charge for dinner, but donations are gratefully accepted, and volunteers are greatly appreciated. Dinners will be nut free, with vegetarian, gluten-free, and dairy-free options available. Doors open at 5 pm and dinner is served at 5:30 pm.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH: Taco Soup/Chili

Ingredients:

1½ lbs. lean ground beef, ground turkey or chicken
2 cups water (or to desired consistency)
1 mild or original Taco Seasoning package
1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes, with liquid
1 can (15.5 oz.) black beans, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 oz.) corn, drained (can also use frozen)
1 can (4 oz.) mild diced chilies (optional)
1 can (10 oz.) Rotel Mexican Tomatoes with green chilies

olive oil
¾ cup onion
2 cloves garlic
1 can (15 oz.) tomato sauce
shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

Instructions:

Brown ground meat in pan, drain fat and set aside. In a large pot, add a small amount of olive oil and sauté the onion until soft. Add garlic to onions and sauté for about one minute. Add meat and remaining ingredients (except cheese) to onion and garlic mixture and bring to a boil, then simmer for about 30 minutes.

Serve soup with cheddar cheese on top if desired. Serves 5-6.



MINUTEMAN SENIOR SERVICES MEAL SITE MENU

The Silver Spoon - Stow's Eating Together Luncheon Site

Come join your neighbors for lunch and socialization on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:00 pm at the COA (Pompositticut Community Center, 509 Great Road, Stow). Please call 781-221-7048 to order your meal. Your order must be made by 12 pm on Thursday for Tuesday's lunch and 12 pm on Tuesday for Thursday's lunch. The suggested donation is \$2 for a complete meal. Need a ride? Call the COA by noon the day before to book your ride to/from the meal site. (There is no charge.) Don't have time to stay? Order a "Grab & Go" meal. For questions about the nutritional information in this menu or your nutritional needs, please contact: Deborah McLean, Dietitian at (781) 221-7018. To CANCEL or ORDER your Meal, Call your local meal site by 11AM the DAY BEFORE. For weather emergencies and cancellations, please check Fox 25 TV station.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Are you unable to drive & cook or have you had a recent health setback? You may be eligible for home-delivered meals. Call Minuteman Senior Services (888-222-6171) to set it up or speak with COA Outreach.

Tuesday Menu

January 2

Chicken Pot Pie with
Mashed Potatoes,
Whole Wheat Dinner Roll,
Jello

January 9

Turkey with Gravy and
Mashed Potatoes, Carrots
Low Sodium Wheat Bread
Mixed Fruit

January 16

Turkey & Sweet Potato Chili
Green Beans, Whole Wheat
Bread, Mandarins

January 23

Baked Cod with Crumb Topping
with Rice Pilaf, Brussels Sprouts
Oat Bread, Mixed Fruit

January 30

Chicken Meatball Sub,
Corn, Creamed Spinach,
Pineapple



Thursday menu

January 4

Hot Dog (beef/pork) with
Hot Dog Roll,
Baked Beans,
Coleslaw,
Cinnamon Pears

January 11

Beef Stew with
Mashed Potatoes,
Cornbread
Fresh Fruit

January 18

Chicken Cordon Bleu
Sweet Potato
Beets
Multi Grain Bread
Pineapple

January 25

Sweet & Sour Pork with
Asian Vegetables,
Veggie Fried Rice,
Dinner Roll, Cake



TOWN CLERK NEWS TOWN CLERK'S 2024 TASK LIST

DOG LICENSES ON SALE NOW: Online system: <https://epay.cityhallsystems.com/selection>

Paper applications mailed with census / street listing Current rabies certificate must be provided/on file with Clerk's office (use online system to check).

WATCH MAIL FOR 2024 CENSUS / STREET LISTING - Please review, update, sign & return asap. No response = voters will be made inactive & require additional paperwork before voting.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT NEWS**EVENING YOGA - Mondays, 5 - 6 pm, Class Fee: \$5**

Please drop in and join us for gentle yoga at Pompo Community Center. No advance registration or commitment required. The focus is on safety and the goal is stress release. We'll achieve this through breath work, stretching, balance work and a mini meditation at the end. Please bring your own mat if you have one. Chairs are also available if you have trouble getting down on the floor. Any questions, please email Maureen at mtrunfio@mac.com.

RANDALL LIBRARY FRIENDS BOOK CHAT

The Randall Library Friends will hold a Book Chat on Saturday, January 20, at 1pm. We will meet at the Pompo Community Center, Room 121, 509 Great Road, Stow. Come chat with other folks about any books you've read and loved and hear from others about their favorites. Refreshments will be available.

CEMETERY & BURIAL CONCERNS?

Robb "GH" Gledhill, Cemetery Supervisor, is available to answer your cemetery and burial questions every third Wednesday of the month (January 17). Call the COA to book a private half-hour consultation. Appointments start at 10 am.

COMMUNITY SERVICES COORDINATOR

Brian O'Sullivan, LICSW, is available to provide information and make referrals to various programs and agencies for residents of all ages. Call 978-897-2638 or email townsocialworker@stow-ma.gov.

VETERANS' AGENT

Joe Jacobs is at Pompositticut Community Center every Tues. 9-11. Call him at 978-290-0278 or email veteransofficer@Stow-MA.gov. You can also meet Joe in a group setting at the Veterans Social on the 3rd Tues. of every month at 10 am.

BOARD OF HEALTH NEWS

TEXTILE RECYCLING AVAILABLE! A Bay State Textile Recycling bin can now be found in the parking lot (on the right side) of the Pompositticut Community Center. This bin is good for textiles in any condition. Please be sure items are clean, dry, and bagged. This bin gets emptied every Monday. Are your items in good condition? Please donate them to the COA's year-round clothing drive.

FREE COVID-19 TEST KITS! Available at the COA and Stow Board of Health for Stow residents.

TOWN NURSE - Tamara Bedard, RN from Nashoba Associated Boards of Health is available Monday through Friday 8:30-4:30 by phone at 978-772-3335 X340.

PLANNING DEPT. NEWS - VISIONING STOW'S HOUSING FUTURE

The Stow Planning Dept. is conducting a survey. What housing needs do we have in Stow? What types of housing would you like to see? Please complete the survey. Go to mapc.ma/stowsurvey. Paper copies available at Pompo. If you have any questions about this project, please email: planning@stow-ma.gov. Sign up for Focus Group, Mon., Jan. 3, see p. 6.

EVENTS AT FIRST PARISH CHURCH

First Parish Church of Stow & Acton (FPC), Unitarian Universalist, is located at 353 Great Road, Stow. Its facilities are wheelchair accessible. For more information, call 978-897-8149 or visit www.fpc-stow-acton.org.

Sunday Services at 10 am: are held both in person and virtually every Sunday at 10 am.

Mike+Ruthy Return to New Revival Coffeehouse: Saturday, January 20, 7 pm

FPC's New Revival Coffeehouse is pleased to announce the return of Mike+Ruthy of the Mammals to our stage. Mike Merenda and Ruth Ungar have recorded and performed their exquisite, original folk music together for two decades as the duo Mike+Ruthy and with their seminal folk-rock quintet The Mammals. Mike+Ruthy concerts blend artistry and authenticity, with fiery fiddle & banjo, emotionally potent harmonies, and dynamic stories that deepen the experience. Tap your toes, dance, or sit back and sing along as Mike+Ruthy "roam effortlessly through the whole span that is Americana, from alt-country to folk to bluegrass." (The Bluegrass Situation). Tickets are \$20 in advance at tinyurl.com/MikeRuthy and \$25 at the door. Doors open at 7 pm and the concert begins at 7:30 pm. Masks are optional. For questions, call 978-274-2593 or email coffeehouse@fpc-stow-acton.org.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK UPS

Troop 1 Stow Scouts will be scheduling home Christmas tree pickups following the holidays for residents of Stow. The scouts would like to make tree disposal convenient and efficient for you. Christmas tree pick up is \$15 per tree. Tree pickup can be scheduled by sending in a check payable to Troop 1 Stow, PO Box 75 Stow, MA 01775 or pay by credit card online at www.troop1stow.net. **Please make your tree pickup reservation by January 3rd.** Trees will be picked up at the end of your driveway starting January 11th and throughout the weekend. **We request trees be at the end of your driveway by 6 pm on Thursday, January 11th.**

SAND FOR SENIORS

Troop 1 Stow Scouts will provide and deliver a 5-gallon bucket of sand to Stow seniors' homes during the winter months to help prevent slips and falls. To receive a bucket or refill a bucket please call 508-259-7866 or email: scoutmaster1stow@gmail.com (Please note that it is a sand/salt mixture)

SOUNDS OF STOW

Open rehearsals Mondays at 7:00 p.m. on Jan 8, 15, & 23

Where: First Parish of Stow/Acton, 353 Great Road, Stow

Join us as we sing into Spring in preparation for our "Mighty Mozart" concert. Membership in Sounds of Stow is open to anyone from any town who can match pitch, learn the music, and blend with the other voices. No audition required. Artistic Director Barbara Jones promotes principles of good singing and serious musicianship at weekly rehearsals that are lively, challenging, and always fun. All voice parts are welcome, especially tenors and basses.

February Newsletter - Deadline to submit: Monday, January 8th by 3 pm
If you would like to have your event published in the newsletter, please send submissions to coa@stow-ma.gov for consideration.



Senior Health Care Legislation on the Move

The Massachusetts Legislature recently passed two bills aimed at improving the quality, accessibility, affordability and equitability of health care for seniors.

In the House of Representatives, legislation that takes a comprehensive approach towards reforming the long-term care industry was passed unanimously.

House Bill 4178, 'An Act to improve quality and oversight of long-term care,' includes provisions to support and expand the workforce, enhance oversight of facilities, and ensure greater access – all while prioritizing quality of care.

To address persistent workforce and financial challenges facing the nursing home sector, the bill establishes a Long-Term Care Workforce and Capital Fund, workforce training programs, requirements for the development of Small House Nursing Homes, and loan programs to off-set certain capital costs and fund other capital improvements at facilities. The bill also tightens licensure terms to hold management companies accountable and lays out the penalties for violating regulations.

In addition, the House bill requires long-term care facilities to develop training and education programs and response plans for infectious disease outbreaks, and directs the Department of Public Health to regulate patient care and financial performance at long-term care facilities. Other provisions in the new law would regulate rate-setting and help acute hospitals more efficiently discharge patients to the appropriate post-acute care settings.

Our Senate counterparts recently passed a bill focused on reigning in ballooning prescription drug costs and overseeing the practices of those that control the industry. The legislation, 'An Act relative to pharmaceutical access, cost and transparency,' also known as PACT 3.0, is aimed at reducing or eliminating cost burdens for Massachusetts residents with conditions like heart disease, asthma and diabetes, and would cap out-of-pocket costs for some widely used medications at \$25 for name-brand versions and at \$0 for generic alternatives. PACT 3.0 includes language I drafted to increase transparency in prescription drug price setting by holding pharmaceutical companies accountable to cost-control benchmarks and measures.

These two important bills build upon past successes and allocations to ensure that Massachusetts residents have access to the care and treatment they need, delivered affordably and safely. If you have any questions as the legislation continues its path through the Legislature, please feel free to contact my office.

Contact Rep. Hogan: State Representative Kate Hogan proudly represents the Third Middlesex District, which includes the towns of Bolton, Hudson, Maynard, and Stow. Reach Rep. Hogan by phone at (617) 722-2600 or email at Kate.Hogan@MAhouse.gov. Find her online at www.repkehogan.com and @RepKateHogan on Facebook and Twitter.

Upcoming Office Hours: January 11, 6-7 pm at the Maynard Public Library



Stow Friends of the Council on Aging
PO Box 97 Stow MA 01775
stowfriendsofthecoa.org

VOLUNTEERS OPPORTUNITIES

The Stow Friends of the Council on Aging (SFCOA) is a 501 (c) (3) all volunteer public charity, dedicated to helping Stow's senior residents through the Council on Aging (COA). Our mission is to support the Stow COA by raising funds and helping to make our community and its leaders aware of the valuable work of the Council on Aging. Here are just a few ideas of volunteer opportunities!

- Manage our social media presence
- Join our Fundraising Committee
- Donate homemade items
- Become part of the Creators Collaborative
- Provide baked goods
- Assist at events (Craft Fair, Second Chance Holiday Sale)
- Assemble raffle baskets
- Grant writing
- Secure Newsletter advertisers

HELP US HELP STOW SENIORS JOIN OUR FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

The Stow Friends of the Council on Aging are looking for volunteers to join our Fundraising Committee. The SFCOA provides financial assistance to the Stow Council on Aging (COA) in furtherance of its mission to provide Stow Seniors with transportation, social activities and where needed financial assistance. We would like to expand our ability to provide financial aid to the COA, particularly in the area of seniors in need. In our great little town, we have seniors dealing with food insecurity, high housing costs and lack of transportation to essential services. The purpose of the Fundraising Committee is to both develop and follow through on new fundraising ideas that will help us raise needed funds. If you have some time and energy and want to help, please join us.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SECOND CHANCE HOLIDAY SALE!

Mission accomplished! Everyone left with a smile on their face and their arms full! Oh, and we raised over \$2,500. Thanks to everyone who donated, shopped, baked, or volunteered. Special thanks for Robin Ulichney and Marcia Mishley who co-led this event. We are already getting ready for 2024 so mark your calendar for Saturday, December 7, 2024. Holiday items are accepted throughout the year.

THANK YOU STOW QUILTERS

The Stow Quilters generously donated their time and talent making a beautiful quilt that was raffled off. Proceeds from the raffle raised \$850.

GIFT SHOP

Open Mon. – Fri. 8 am – 3:30 pm
 Located at Pompo Community Center
 509 Great Road

The Stow COA gift shop offers many items to help us all through the long winter ahead stay cozy as we approach the winter season from hand crafted hats, sweaters, and hand warmers to Town of Stow commemorative throws and much more. Check us out for all your gift-giving needs. Shop locally and support our town's seniors at the same time!

DONATIONS RECEIVED

In Memory of Beverly Benoit: Judith and Maureen Hickey

In Memory of Diane Bachtell: Carol Ford

In Memory of Dick Mortenson: Nancy Bernard

General: Laura Reiner, Pamela Weathers, Gordon and Gloria Watson, Committee for a New N.R.H.S.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

SFCOA MEETINGS

The SFCOA invites you to attend our monthly meetings held at the Pompo Community Center from 10 to 11:30 on the first Tuesday of every month. Meet current executive board members and share your ideas. We need your energy to support the COA! Interested but cannot attend? Email StowFriendsCOA@gmail.com

SFCOA CONTACT INFO

Stow Friends of the Council on Aging
 PO Box 97 Stow MA 01775
stowfriendsofthecoa.org

We are a 501 (c) (3) all volunteer public charity.
 PO Box 97, Stow, MA 01775

Website: <https://stowfriendsofthecoa.com>

Facebook: Stow Friends of the Council on Aging

Email: StowFriendsCOA@gmail.com

president@stowfriendsofthecoa.org

vicepresident@stowfriendsofthecoa.org

treasurer@stowfriendsofthecoa.org

clerk@stowfriendsofthecoa.org

SFCOA BOARD MEMBERS

Rita French, President

Angelo Sallese, Vice President

Robert Gardner, Treasurer

Robin Ulichney, Clerk

Marcia Mishley

Nancy Patton

Sheila Smith

STOW FRIENDS OF THE COUNCIL ON AGING

Would you like to support the Stow Council on Aging? Now is your chance.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$25 Other Amount: _____

☐ General ☐ In Memory Of _____ ☐ Other

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: SFCOA
MAIL TO: P.O. BOX 97, STOW, MA 01775
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT